

Appendix C

Accommodations Guidance

Introduction

A major goal of policy makers is to ensure educational opportunities for all students. It is equally important to measure the true progress of all students as they work to obtain success with the academic standards. Therefore, the participation of students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency in required state assessments and the inclusion of their scores in related reports are important. Participation of these students in the required state assessments will vary; however, all students who expect to receive a high school diploma – including students with disabilities – must participate in assessments and are subject to the graduation requirements.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires that assessments are accessible and provide all students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act in 2004 (or IDEA '04) required states to incorporate the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) in the development of test questions and administration of tests for accountability purposes under NCLB.

How does universal design for learning (UDL) impact assessment?

Universal design for learning (UDL) refers to the creation of assessments that allow greater access for all users. The effect of race, gender, disability, or language barriers on test results is greatly reduced through the incorporation of UDL principles during the construction of the test. When instituted appropriately, there are fewer requests for accommodations as the items are more accessible for all students. An assessment that is designed with the concept of UDL as its framework permits valid inferences about the performance of students with diverse characteristics and is inherently more equitable for all users. This concept has been applied to the assessments used by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) as part of the requirements of NCLB and IDEA 2008.

Strategies

What is a strategy and how is a strategy different from an accommodation?

For purposes of this Appendix, which is written specifically for standardized assessments, educational strategies are general practices that afford students access to valid involvement in an assessment supported by UDL principles. The strategy may have originally been taught to the student, but by this point in the student educational career, the strategy has become a regular part of the student's instruction practice and requires no interactions from the teacher to be implemented. In order to apply a strategy to the testing situation, it is required that a student implements the strategy routinely outside of the testing situation within the core academic content area being assessed.

These practices support a given student's performance but are otherwise unrelated to the difficulty of the task that is being measured. The strategy must be documented in the student's educational record in one of the following ways:

1. Locally – in the student's cumulative file
2. Formally – in an IEP, ILP, Section 504 Plan, or Service Plan

Allowable Strategies:

- Student allowed to use special furniture or equipment for viewing test
- Student provided preferential seating
- Student allowed to use headphones to block out distractions
- Student allowed to use lined paper turned sideways to help align math problems
- Student allowed to use a low-tech assistive writing instrument

Accommodations

What is an accommodation?

An accommodation is a change in the standardized testing materials or procedures that enables students with a disability or a language deficiency to participate in an assessment in a way that measures abilities. An accommodation does not change the concept being measured. Testing accommodations are designed to “level the playing field” during the testing situation or to achieve “assessment parity” for all students regardless of disability or language deficiency.

Students receiving special education services, students with documented acute or chronic disabilities, and students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) may be entitled to assessment accommodations. These accommodations are determined by the team of educational professionals who best know the student and are documented formally in the student’s educational record in one of the following ways:

- Individual Education Program (IEP) – For students with disabilities served under IDEA receiving special education services.
- Section 504 Plan – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires public schools to provide accommodations to students with disabilities even if they do not qualify for special education services under IDEA.
- Service Plan - A nonpublic school student with a disability receives special education and related services from the public school in accordance with a **service plan**. A service plan is similar to an IEP, but does not contain all of the components of an IEP. Accommodations for state assessments are permitted for students who are Limited English Proficient at levels 1-4 (refer to Chapter 6).
- Individual Learning Plan (ILP) - The ILP is a specialized plan that included accommodations for each Limited English Proficient student who has been identified on the Placement assessment as a Level 1-4.
- 5-2-4 (b) Accommodations Plan - School corporations may provide testing accommodations to a student with a temporary disability, such as a broken arm, when that condition prevents the student from ISTEP+ participation in the manner in which the student would normally participate.

The *Assessment Accommodations* charts which follow provide acceptable accommodations a student may use during the required state assessments. ***Each accommodation should be one with which the student is familiar and uses on a regular basis in his/her educational program.***

How will schools document which accommodations are used during the required state assessments?

If a student uses an accommodation on a state assessment that is required to be reported, it is noted in the barcode data file or on the *Student Information Questionnaire* (SIQ). Specific directions for coding the SIQ are provided within the *Assessment Accommodations* charts.

Will the results of tests taken with accommodations (including students with disabilities and students who are Limited English Proficient) be included in aggregate assessment results?

Yes. One significant issue to be addressed by educators is the individualized determination of each student's necessary accommodations and the effect or impact of those accommodations on test results. Assessment accommodations may have a different impact on the general validity of the assessment depending upon, among other things, whether the test is referenced to national norms or specific educational criteria. For this reason, allowable accommodations, when applied during the assessment, must be documented in the barcode data file or indicated on the *Student Information Questionnaire* (SIQ) to aid in the disaggregation of state and local data.

The results of required state and local assessments are reported annually according to the following categories:

1. All students tested.
2. General education students who tested with a permissible accommodation(s).
3. General education students who tested without accommodation(s).
4. Special education students who tested with a permissible accommodation(s).
5. Special education students who tested without accommodation(s).
6. Limited English Proficient students who tested with a permissible accommodation(s).
7. Limited English Proficient students who tested without accommodation(s).

Use of a Scribe

How may a scribe be used?

Scribing is an accommodation used with students who are unable to provide written answers for classwork, and therefore, in the test book. When a student's educational plan indicates that a response is to be scribed, the test administration must be conducted one-on-one so as not to interfere with the standardized testing of other students.

In lieu of using a human scribe, several speech-to-text software programs exist that could be used to record the student's response¹. A student should use assistive technology (AT) devices in a testing situation only if the student uses the device(s) in the classroom and is able to independently use the accommodation. If the AT device is not conducive to an individual student's needs, a human scribe can be used, given time to practice prior to entering the testing session.

¹ The use of a software program to transfer the student's spoken words to text would need certain assurances and parameters in place. Those restrictions are explained in detail under the question: *When and how much technology can be used during the administration of required state assessments?*

The scribe should be quite familiar with the student's vocabulary, spelling and grammar skills. Ideally, the scribe will have worked with the student in scribing activities for a minimum of three months. Unless the student is also eligible to have the assessments read, the student must read the test directions, questions, and response options on his or her own.

The directions below outline the procedure for using a scribe:

1. For multiple-choice or gridded-response items, the student must point to (or otherwise indicate) the desired response option (i.e., eye gaze, head pointer, etc.).
2. Once the student makes his/her selection, the scribe will mark the indicated answer choice and have the student check for accuracy.
3. For constructed-response items, the student may dictate the answer to the scribe. The scribe, in return, records the response one of two ways:
 - a. Writes the answer while prompting for spelling when uncertain as to whether a word is within the student's vocabulary or spelling skill level; or
 - b. Types the student's response onto a computer (with spell check and grammar check disabled) while the student watches on the screen.In either scenario, the student must review what the scribe has written to ensure accuracy and approval before advancing to the next question.
4. The scribe may not coach or correct the student on:
 - a. the meaning of a word,
 - b. the spelling of a word, or
 - c. the punctuation of a sentence.
5. Capitalization or punctuation should not be included in the written responses unless instructed to do so by the student.
6. Every time the student pauses, the scribe should begin writing on a new line. No presumption should be made as to whether the pause is indicative of a comma or other mark of punctuation unless so instructed by the student.
7. When the student has finished dictating, the written text is presented to the student for review. The student can indicate any necessary punctuation or capitalization. The student may also instruct the scribe to make other changes or additions (such as moving a sentence into another paragraph, adding an additional word or phrase, or correcting a spelling error).
8. Each scribed response should begin with the word "Scribe" in the response field.

Use of Assistive Technology

When and how much assistive technology may be used during the administration of required state assessments (other than online testing)?

Access to technology may be provided for those students with a documented need when the student uses that technology on a regular basis within his/her educational program (including testing situations).

Due to test security and the technological literacy of students, there are many parameters that must be followed when using technology devices during testing situations.

- The test administrator, proctor, and School Test Coordinator should collaboratively make technology determinations.
- Extra batteries and back-up equipment, when possible, should be prepared prior to the start of the test session.
- Separate testing rooms for students taking the required state assessment with the aid of technology may need to be arranged.

In order to use technology (other than online testing) during a required state assessment administration, the Corporation or School Test Coordinator **must submit a request for approval** to the Indiana Department of Education, Office of Student Assessment using the ***Request for Non-Standard Assessment Accommodation*** form (see *Appendix B*) by the date specified on the form.

What are the requirements when using technology (other than online testing) during the administration of state assessments?

1. The computers used must be disabled from any network or internet connection, including connections to any type of electronic distribution access, such as electronic mail, during the testing situation.
2. The test coordinator or proctor must be able to see the monitor or screen of the device being used at all times.
3. The software used with the technology device must have the spell check, grammar check, the thesaurus and any other tool functions disabled.
4. The software used with the technology device must have the capacity to either be password coded or have the student locked out from the help functions throughout the assessment.
5. Student answers must be printed at the end of the test session and may not be saved electronically; hard copies should be placed into the student's test book at the appropriate section. The School Test Coordinator must also keep a hard copy of the student response at the local level (see #6 below).
6. To ensure copyright protections and compliance, one test booklet must be used for each student who uses technology to access the booklet.
7. At the conclusion of the test sessions each day, the device must be examined to ensure that none of the test components or the student's responses are stored on the device. In addition, a hard copy of the student's responses must be made and filed, as outlined in the *Test Coordinator's Manual*.

What accommodations are built-in tools for ISTEP+ online?

- A screen reader (read aloud)*
- Change in color and/or font
- Large font size will display test items in 18-point font.
- Background color and font colors can be changed for both questions and answers.

* When a screen reader is available it **must** be used in lieu of a human reader for standardization. Standardization refers to adherence to uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment. Standardization is an essential feature of educational assessments and is **necessary to produce comparable information about student learning**.

What resources are available to help determine the use of Assistive technology?

PATINS Project Technology Skills Checklists (<http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/individualized-learning/indicator-3-assessment>)

Prohibited Accommodations

The following accommodations are **not allowed at any time**:

Presentation

- Reduce the complexity of the language in the directions or test items
- Use of visual cues or color-coded prompts
- Assessment administered in a language other than English

Timing/Scheduling

- Unlimited time given for each test section
- Sessions extended beyond an instructional day
- Return to a prior test session after conclusion of that session

Allowable Accommodations

To be permitted, an accommodation **MUST** be used by the student on a regular basis in the classroom and **MUST** be documented formally in the student's educational record (Individualized Education Program [IEP], Individual Learning Plan [ILP], Section 504 Plan, or nonpublic school plan [Service Plan]).

The Assessment Accommodations that follow outline accommodations and administrative guidance:

Documentation Needed

- An open circle (○) indicates an accommodation that:
 - **MUST be documented** formally in the student's educational record (Individualized Education Program [IEP], Individual Learning Plan [ILP], Section 504 Plan, or nonpublic school plan [Service Plan]); **and**
 - **is NOT recorded** on the *Student Information Questionnaire (SIQ)*.

- A closed circle (●) indicates an accommodation that:
 - **MUST be documented** formally in the student’s educational record (Individualized Education Program [IEP], Individual Learning Plan [ILP], Section 504 Plan, or nonpublic school plan [Service Plan]); **and**
 - **MUST be recorded** on the *Student Information Questionnaire* (SIQ).
- A “shaded” area represents an accommodation that is **NOT allowable**.

Key	
●	Requires reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire</i> (SIQ)
○	Does not require reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire</i> (SIQ)

Assessment Accommodations

Presentation	Eligibility Criteria	Accommodation	
		IEP/504/ Service Plan	ILP
	Student provided access to sound amplification system	○	
	Student allowed to use assistive technology to magnify/enlarge	○	
	Student allowed to use acetate film	○	
	Student permitted to read aloud to him or herself	●	
	Student provided access to large print version of test	●	
	Student provided access to own resources (e.g., bold print protractor, real coins, bold/raised line graph paper, bold/raised line writing paper)	●	
	Student provided access to a Braille test format	●	
	Student provided access to an interpreter for sign language	●	
	Student provided access to a talking/screen reading device (cannot be used for reading comprehension portion of test)	●	●
	Test read aloud to the student by test administrator (except items testing comprehension)	●	●

Key	
●	Requires reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire</i> (SIQ)
○	Does not require reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire</i> (SIQ)

Presentation

Student provided access to sound amplification system



Eligible: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Guidelines: Actual test questions may not be read aloud.
The student may turn the system off during the test session (to reduce distractions).

Implementation: Extra batteries may be needed if device fails during assessment.

Student allowed to use assistive technology to magnify/enlarge



Eligible: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Guidelines: The actual test book may not be copied or enlarged.

Implementation: The student may need to be seated near an electrical outlet.
In the event that technology does not function properly, a backup plan should be developed prior to the test administration.

Student allowed to use acetate film



Eligible: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Guidelines: The actual test book may not be copied or enlarged.

Student permitted to read aloud to him or herself



Eligible: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Preparation: This should be anticipated prior to the start of the test session as it will necessitate one-on-one test administration.

Student provided access to large print version of test

- Eligible:** IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan
- Guidelines:** Extra time may be provided, unless specified and documented in the student's IEP.
- Preparation:** A larger desk may be needed to accommodate the size of the test books.
Orders for large print test books are placed at the same time as orders for Braille test books. Contact the Corporation Test Coordinator to confirm the request of these documents.

Student provided access to own resources (e.g., bold print protractor, real coins, bold/raised lined graph paper, and bold/raised lined writing paper)

- Eligible:** IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan
- Preparation:** The Corporation Test Coordinator must approve any resource prior to the test session. Each resource must be inspected prior to use to ensure nothing is written of additional benefit or that no other modification to the resource has been made.

Student provided access to a Braille test format

- Eligible:** IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan
- Guidelines:** Students may respond in Braille or with an AT device.
Some Braille may be used in combination with other accommodations.
- Preparation:** The Braille version is typically provided in contracted Braille.
Braille versions of the tests must be ordered well in advance.
Braille test books are packaged and shipped separately to the test vendor for scoring.
The student's name must appear on every Braille page submitted for scoring.
Extended time is allowed.
A test session cannot extend beyond an instructional day.
- Implementation:** Due to the bulk of Braille and the noise involved with the use of Braillewriter, consideration to the appropriate test environment is required.

Student provided access to an interpreter for sign language

- Eligible:** IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan
- Guidelines:** Student should be familiar with interpreter.
Interpreter may only sign verbatim what is being stated by the test administrator.
Parents are not allowed to serve as the educational interpreter.
Reading comprehension questions may not be signed to the student under any circumstances.
While the interpreter or proctor may be used to reading the questions verbatim, the test directions must be provided by a licensed teacher (also the test administrator).
- Preparation:** Extended time is allowed.
A test session cannot extend beyond an instructional day.
- Implementation:** Small group or one-one one testing should be considered in this situation.

Student provided access to a talking/screen reading device (cannot be used for reading comprehension questions)

- Eligible:** IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan
- Guidelines:** The reading comprehension questions may not be presented with a text reader.
- Preparation:** The Corporation Test Coordinator must verify that the technology guidelines are met.
In the event that technology does not function properly, a backup plan should be developed prior to the test administration.

Test read aloud to the student by test administrator (except reading comprehension questions)

- Eligible:** IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan
- Guidelines:** The reading comprehension questions may not be presented orally, nor may any question where oral presentation is noted as being prohibited.
- Implementation:** Audio CDs and online text readers are suggested methods of providing this accommodation.

Setting and Environment	Eligibility Criteria	Accommodation	
		IEP/504/ Service Plan	ILP
	Student provided preferential seating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Student allowed to use headphones to block out distractions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Student provided special lighting conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Student tested in small group setting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Student tested individually	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Key	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Requires reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire (SIQ)</i>
<input type="radio"/>	Does not require reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire (SIQ)</i>

Setting and Environment

Student provided special lighting conditions



Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan

Preparation: Seating for the student should be planned prior to the test administration to ensure placement near an electrical outlet.
In the event that technology does not function properly, a backup plan should be developed prior to the test administration.

Student tested in small group setting



Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan

Guidelines: If possible, have the assessment administered or proctored by a person with whom the student is familiar.

Student tested individually



Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Guidelines: If possible, have the assessment administered or proctored by a person with whom the student is familiar.

Response Format	Eligibility Criteria	Accommodation	
		IEP/504/ Service Plan	ILP
	Student allowed to use lined paper turned sideways to help align math problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Student allowed to use a low-tech assistive writing instrument	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Student allowed to use alternative indication of response (e.g., circle, point to, or state answer)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
	Student provided access to a scribe for all open-ended items	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
	Student allowed to use a calculator during sessions identified as non-calculator sessions	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
	Student allowed to use an approved, bilingual word-to-word dictionary	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
	Student provided access to a computer or other assistive technology (AT) device	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	

Key	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Requires reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire</i> (SIQ)
<input type="radio"/>	Does not require reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire</i> (SIQ)

Response Format

Student allowed to use alternative indication of response (i.e., circle, point to, or state answer) ●

Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Guidelines: Alternative indication of response options are: circle, point to, state, or otherwise indicate answers to multiple-choice and/or gridded-response questions.

This accommodation may be indicated for students who have limited hand strength, are non-verbal, or experience lack of control over/expertise with prosthesis.

This requires a test administrator with whom the student is familiar.

Preparation: This requires a one-on-one test session.

Student provided access to a scribe for all open-ended items (e.g., constructed-response, extended response, short response, and essay) ●

Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Guidelines: Scribe writes out the answers as dictated by the student.

Assistive technology (AT), rather than a human scribe, should be utilized whenever possible (e.g., a speech-to-text software program).

A time limit should be set for the student (e.g., time and 1/2). Unlimited time should not be used to avoid frustration for the student.

A single test session cannot be extended beyond an instructional day.

Preparation: Review the instructions in the *ISTEP+ Program Manual* on how to use a scribe and how technology may be used during the assessment session.

The scribe must be someone who understands the student well and knows when to ask for clarification of spelling, etc.

Student allowed to use a calculator during sessions identified as non-calculator sessions

Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Guidelines: The student must be provided with the type of calculator used on a routine basis.

The student is still required to write out the steps used to solve the problem. Written work must be submitted along with the test book and processed for scoring.

Preparation: The School Test Coordinator must review and approve the calculator per the guidance provided in the *Examiner's Manual*.

Student allowed to use an approved, bilingual word-to-word dictionary

Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan

Guidelines: This is an accommodation that may only be used with students who are LEP (Levels 1-4).

Preparation: A list of approved bilingual word-to-word dictionaries may be found in *Appendix I* of the *ISTEP+ Program Manual*.

Typically this will involve a test administrator with whom the student is familiar. A time limit should be set for the student (e.g., time and 1/2). Unlimited time should not be used to avoid frustration for the student. A test session cannot be extended beyond the instructional day.

Student provided access to a computer or other assistive technology (AT) device*

Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, Service Plan

Guidelines: Unless documented in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan, extended time will not be allowed.

Preparation: In the event that technology does not function properly, a backup plan should be developed prior to the test administration.

Use of AT devices must comply with technology guidelines.

*In order to use technology (other than online testing) during a required state assessment administration, the Corporation or School Test Coordinator **must submit a request for approval** to the Indiana Department of Education, Office of Student Assessment using the ***Request for Non-Standard Assessment Accommodation*** form (provided in *Appendix B* of the *ISTEP+ Program Manual*) by the date specified on the form.

Timing / Scheduling	Eligibility Criteria	Accommodation	
		IEP/504/ Service Plan	ILP
	Time of day for testing altered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Student provided additional breaks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Test administered in several sessions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Longer breaks between sessions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Student provided extended testing time for test sessions	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Key	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Requires reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire (SIQ)</i>
<input type="radio"/>	Does not require reporting in the barcode data file or on the <i>Student Information Questionnaire (SIQ)</i>

Timing / Scheduling

Time of day for testing altered



Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan

Guidelines: The English/language arts writing prompt must be completed by all students in the same school in a particular grade at the same time to the extent possible. The writing prompt may not be given over multiple days.

For all assessment sessions, once a session has started, it must be completed during that same day.

Preparation: This accommodation will require thoughtful scheduling of test sessions.

Student provided additional breaks



Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan

Guidelines: Additional breaks can only occur at the end of a test session (a test session cannot be interrupted).

Preparation: Additional breaks must be planned for prior to the start of the test session.

Test administered in several sessions



Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan

Guidelines: The English/language arts writing prompt must be completed by all students in the same school in a particular grade at the same time to the extent possible. The writing prompt may not be given over multiple days.

For all assessment sessions, once a session has started, it must be completed during that same day.

Unless specified and documented in the student's IEP, no extra time may be provided.

Preparation: This accommodation will require thoughtful scheduling of the test session.

This accommodation requires planning and collaboration to ensure that all other administration requirements for the assessment are met (e.g., the order of the test sessions is not altered, natural pauses in sessions are considered, etc.).

Longer breaks between test sessions



Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan

Guidelines: Test sessions must be given in consecutive order (as outlined in the *Examiner's Manual*).

This accommodation may only occur at the end of a test session.

Preparation: This accommodation requires planning and collaboration to ensure that all other administration requirements for the assessment are met (e.g., the order of the test sessions is not altered, natural pauses in sessions are considered, etc.).

Student provided extended testing time for test sessions



Eligibility Criteria: IEP, Section 504 Plan, ILP, Service Plan

Guidelines: This accommodation is permitted for any student who is LEP (Levels 1-4).

A time limit should be set for the student (e.g., time and 1/2). Unlimited time should not be used to avoid frustration for the student.

A test session cannot be extended beyond an instructional day.